

## Keep Walking Beyond The Door

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Summary: "If we don't continue to struggle, then nothing will begin."  
- Unknown. An AU drabble from Astrid's POV. Usually not a fan of these, but I figured I might as well give it a whirl.

## Keep Walking Beyond The Door

**\*\*Author's Notes:\*\***

â€¢ Please excuse my extended absence. To be honest, I've still been writing. I've just been neglecting my account here for one reason or another. But I'm not gonna get into that since it's menial and unimportant.

â€¢ Random alternate universe drabble. I'm usually not a fan of these, but for some reason I felt like writing one.

â€¢ I do not own \_How To Train Your Dragon\_. It belongs to \_Dreamworks\_ and Cressida Cowell respectively.

\* \* \*

><p>Red.<p>

That awful color.

To some, the color represented blood and war. It was fearsome and passionate. A vibrant hue that clouded one's rational thoughts in favor of the more simple-minded and emotionally charged. In its lighter shades of pink, it could be used to fuel the desperation of someone seeking companionship in another human being and denoted the female gender by default. With its darker variations, it could symbolize rage, malice, or even the strongest forms of courage and valor.

Red, by itself, was an emotionally intense color. It had very high

visibility, which was why stop signs, traffic signals, and fire equipment were adorned with its fiery brilliance. In contrast to these physical objects, the color also presented a mental image of energy, which went against the point of stop signs in their effort to make you less likely to end up in wreck.

And while Astrid understood these things, that didn't make her any less impatient at the stop light she was forced to wait to change from its angry saturation to a color of a more pleasant imitation. She drummed her fingers across the steering wheel, her left foot tapping impatiently on the floorboard, the broken radio not daring to crackle even in the slightest, and her already characteristically glacier-colored eyes were glaring heated daggers up at the infuriating light as if she intended the melt the metal and electrical wiring without leaving the comfort of the driver's seat.

In retrospect, maybe she shouldn't have only thrown on a light, baggy jacket in her rush out of her house not fifteen minutes ago. The fact that she even owned one of those when it rarely ever got over forty degrees for the vast majority of the year was beyond anyone's logical guess. Adding insult to injury was that, like the radio, the heater had gone out last week and the Astrid didn't own a pair of gloves that didn't have the fingers removed. If she wasn't so angry, she would have felt the smallest tinge of gratitude for at least remembering that there hadn't been any reports of dragons in the sky all week.

As it was, it was a warm day by normal standards. There was only a light flurry of snow, hardly any ice hanging from the telephone poles, and no wild moose were clogging up the streets. Astrid should have been counting her blessings, but right now she wasn't in the mood to thank Skadi for being a little merciful toward the agitated teenager.

And she would have run through the damn light if it weren't for the fact that a police car was in line directly behind her.

Astrid jerked her sharp glare up at her rear-view mirror. The cop didn't seem all that concerned, which only seemed to irk her further. She was renowned for possessing a short fuse, but her already thin patience was about to buckle under the weight of everything that seemed to be out to make today more complicated. If she didn't have a destination in mind, Astrid would have likely said to hell with it and put her lead foot to good use.

Her phone went off in her jacket pocket, giving off a buzzing noise coupled with an equally irritating default ringtone that was supposed to sound chipper but only succeeded in further grating on the blond's nerves. Astrid balled a fist and prepared to crush the nonfunctional radio, but stopped short when her brain grabbed hold of her wrath and yanked it back into its proper, logical place. Cursing her luck, Astrid fumbled with her icy fingers to snatch the cellular hunk of junk from her pocket. No sooner was she given a chance to so much as glance at the thing's screen did she hear a car horn go off behind her. Astrid was normally one to keep her cool, but she'd had just about enough. She was this close to jumping of her truck, taking the baseball bat she kept beneath the driver's seat, and smashing the cop car's headlights in.

Saving her misplaced vengeance for another time and place, the blond shoved her phone back into her pocket and eased her foot on the gas. Maybe the gods her mother was always going on and on about were finally feeling a bit merciful for Astrid as the cop turned left instead of continuing to follow her. She breathed a sigh of relief. He'd been tailing her for several blocks now and Astrid, being of a sound state of mind, was not legally supposed to be driving. Being underage had its disadvantages. She didn't even have her learner's permit. But Astrid had been doing it for weeks and what her mother didn't know couldn't hurt her.

With how long Astrid had been gone, she was surprised her phone hadn't gone off from her mother demanding to know where she was and why the ancient cyan and white pick-up truck was missing from the backyard. The blond wasn't dressed to fight the cold either. Aside from her baggy olive jacket, all Astrid had on was a pair of dark sweatpants, a ratted out teal tank top, fingerless tan gloves, and faded brown hiking boots. She hadn't had the good sense to grab a hat or throw on an extra shirt. Behind the front seat, sitting in a worn-out black leather case, was a vintage faded gray and brown electric guitar appropriately dubbed her axe. It had needed countless repairs over the years due to it being used as said weapon over the heads of people she had deemed irritating. In this day and age, walking around without at least some sort of weapon could be suicidal. And not because of people either. The simple fact that all of its strings were in working order was pretty miraculous. Her plaited braid was sopping wet and hidden from view thanks to her hood being up and the curtain of blond bangs over her left eye was partially frozen.

Three blankets were stacked haphazardly in the passenger seat, but those weren't for herself. Curled up on within the fabrics was a small bundle of spines, wings, claws, and scales. Every so often, the wad would chirp in its sleep or raise its bulbous head to see where they were going. Honestly, if Astrid's mother knew she was traveling with a baby dragon, she would have flipped her lid. As it was, the blond felt responsible for the hatchling despite having tried to kill the baby only yesterday. She kept telling herself that she intended to leave the thing with someone who knew how to properly raise dragons, but the blond was sadly finding herself growing attached to it. Whether she realized it or not, Astrid was learning what certain chirps meant and had brought the scaled infant because she was afraid her mother would kill it should she find it in the shed. And for all Astrid knew, dragons were like birds in that if a human touched their babies, they'd want nothing more to do with them. The little Nadder had been rubbing up against her all morning. By Thor's hairy armpits, she didn't even know what the baby dragon's gender was!

As a whole, Astrid was unfamiliar with what dragons were or how they functioned. They'd been regarded as nuisances for as long as she could remember. The only reason the baby Nadder was alive in her truck at the moment was because someone had stopped her from killing it when she found it in her shed. And, given where she was heading, Astrid felt she might as well bring the unnamed dragon along for the ride. After all, she was on her way to finding the very idiot who the baby owed its life to. If nothing else, Astrid intended to find out more about what was going on and set a few things straight.

Reminding herself that she wasn't doing this for herself, Astrid

changed gears to push the old truck to go a little faster. Blazing to her destination was out of the question with the falling snow and potential ice on the road. And she really didn't want to bother with reading the text message. Just seeing who it was from was enough for her. All together, emergency contacts and family members included, Astrid had less than twelve people in her contacts list. She'd never been a social kid and the few people who had her phone number knew she hated answering walls of text.

Astrid bit back an exhausted sigh as she pulled up to a stop sign. With nobody behind her and nobody left waiting for her to go, Astrid yanked her phone back out, jerked it open, and began to scramble with the buttons to type out a message that would have made her English teacher shriek. Satisfied, she shoved it back into her pocket. Astrid barely had her hand around the stick shift before the blasted thing went off again. The blond swore an oath on Loki under her breath as she wrenched the phone back out again.

The process continued back and forth for a good ten minutes before the messages abruptly stopped. Astrid's brow knit together as she stared at the phone balanced on top of the steering wheel. After spending several minutes sending messages, she had a steadier hand when it came to punching the right keys. Another two minutes went by and still no new message chimes. Astrid was growing concerned. Her numb fingers clumsily snatched up the phone, stumbled across the buttons, transcribed a prompt dispatch, and as soon as the `_message sent_` indicator blinked across the screen, Astrid shoved the phone in her pocket and took the truck out of `_park_`.

`_â†'I am on my way._`

\* \* \*

><p>In hindsight, what had lead up to this whole trip shouldn't have been as awkward as it had ended up being. Last night, she'd been sitting on the steps of her back porch, just minding her own business while playing a random tune on her `[i]axe[i]`. Only the first few stars were shining and her mother had left to do something or other. The snow had finally stopped falling a few hours prior. The occasional note from her guitar helped to fill the otherwise silent evening. It was just a nice, normal Friday night.

Or at least it had started out that way.

Astrid was used to getting an audience when she played any sort of music. She was known for sneaking into the bleachers after school and playing until either she grew bored or she garnered some unwanted attention. Hardly anybody knew she walked home from school despite it being a fair distance away. The blond didn't particularly like the idea of people knowing where she lived to be perfectly honest. So after another small group of undesired admirers stopped to lend their ears, Astrid picked up her things and hiked home.

Several hours later, there she found herself, sitting on her porch, playing some unknown tune in random intervals, and just enjoying the time to herself. Or so she had thought anyway. The first pair of eyes she noticed were amber in color and watching her from the cracked open door of her garage. At first, Astrid had felt unnerved. The eyes never blinked and regarded her with a curiosity one would associate with a small child after they'd been informed they couldn't touch

something. So Astrid continued to strike the notes on her guitar while keeping a wary eye on whoever it was watching her. It was when the little creature poked its head out of the darkness that Astrid realized it was a small dragon of a bright blue variety. But, at the time, she hadn't known what kind, how dangerous, or even how old it was.

Out of instinct, Astrid stopped playing because her hand had tightened over the neck of her guitar as she prepared herself to smack whatever the creature was. But something had stopped her. Or rather, someone had just happened to be walking by and conveniently knew it was her and accidentally stumbled into her backyard to try and stop her from smashing the little dragon into oblivion. To make a long and perplexing story short, Astrid ended up being the new adopted mother of a baby Deadly Nadder after he'd stopped her from slaying said dragon after being introduced to a larger, black dragon inappropriately named Toothless. The sight of the little monster had originally repelled and angered her, but with time, Astrid found she kind of liked the tiny ball of scales, teeth, and claws.

And it was with this knowledge he'd left her with that lead Astrid to deciding she wanted to help him somehow.

\* \* \*

><p>It'd taken thirty minutes, three ignored red lights, five uses of the same international middle finger gesture at other drivers, one irritating traffic jam followed by one off-road venture, two near-misses with other vehicles, and innumerable swear words. But Astrid had almost made it to her destination.<p>

. . . Almost being the key word.

She was parked on the corner a few blocks away from her improvised destination, the truck's engine turned off, and her chin resting on the top of the steering wheel. The initial plan was to park in the driveway and slam on the horn until she got some sort of response. Instead Astrid had maneuvered into a standstill next to what should have been an abandoned park. It was just above freezing outside and barely any warmer inside the truck when the engine wasn't running. The blue baby dragon had moved from its spot on the blankets to sit on the girl's lap, its chin resting on the bottom part of the steering wheel. It seemed rather happy despite the chill judging by the pleased chatter it was making. It glanced up at her, chewed on the steering wheel, occasionally flapped its tiny wings, and had its tail loosely coiled around the girl's upper right arm. Astrid was shivering all over from the cold, but she was grateful for the abnormal reptile's company. Apparently, baby Nadders were excellent sources of heat.

Blowing up into her bangs, Astrid drew her eyes away from the scaled infant to peer out the window.

He had to have been sitting there for a little while judging by the thin layer of snow on his arched back, shoulders, and hood over his head. A single saddlebag was on the ground next to him with its own growing layers of frost covering it. From her distance, Astrid couldn't tell how many layers of clothing he had on or if he even had a blanket. It was hard to make out any details with the several feet

between them and steadily falling flakes of snow.

Why would anyone in their right mind want to sit out in the cold like that? Astrid couldn't wrap her mind around it, yet here she was, doing the same thing. She gave a deep exhale before pulling her head away from the steering wheel. She glared down at her phone in her right hand, having been waiting for it to go off since her last message.

Not wanting to honk her horn or simply drive up and risk startling him, Astrid cracked her frozen fingers and slowly typed another message.

\_You frozen over there, Hiccup?\_

At first, nothing happened. Astrid had just unfastened her seat-belt when she finally spotted the first signs of life.

Maybe it was the ridiculous nickname. Maybe the cold was finally getting to him. Or maybe the runt had known she was there the whole time but honestly didn't believe she would have shown up at all. Whatever the reason, Astrid watched him fumble with something in his jacket before he raised his head. He looked around, seeming almost bewildered, before finally staring at the truck with an expression Astrid couldn't read given their distance. And this continued for several minutes before her phone went off again, startling the blond into banging her knee on the bottom of the wide steering wheel. She swore an oath while the baby Nadder pushed itself against her stomach and chirped in an almost concerned tone. She hadn't even seen him move his hand to send her a message! Choosing to ignore that detail for another time, Astrid flipped her phone open and scanned its contents.

\_What are you doing here?\_

Astrid stared at it for a several seconds as her left eyebrow slowly arched its way behind her veil of blond bangs. She somehow resisted the urge to kick the driver side door open, stomp out there, and bury him alive in ten feet of snow. By now, the Nadder had calmed down again and was trying to take a bite out of the bottom of Astrid's cell phone. With one hand she massaged the dragon between its wings and fumbled with the buttons in the other.

\_What do you think?\_

Were they playing an involuntary game of twenty questions?

Before he was given the chance to send Astrid another message, the blond rolled down the window and stuck her head out of the vehicle. Probably a stupid move because now the small accumulation of heat between her and the baby dragon was being snuffed out while fresh flakes of snow were falling inside. The Nadder snuggled further into Astrid's stomach, all the while whining like a small puppy. Ignoring the turquoise dragon for now, the girl stuck her head and left arm out of the vehicle and waved. When nothing happened, Astrid pulled herself back in to slam impatiently on the horn. The Nadder wailed like it had been shot from the sudden sound and shoved its face into her jacket.

At first, nothing happened. Everything and everyone seemed to be

feeling a bit lethargic today with all of the slow movements. She could barely make out his pale face behind his fur-lined hood, so there was no way for Astrid to be 100% certain she even had the right guy. It could have been pure coincidence that he'd lifted his head when she'd sent her previous text. But after several minutes went by, he finally gave the first signs of movement. He grabbed his bag, slung it over his shoulder, and slowly rose to his feet. However, instead of walking toward the truck like Astrid had wanted him to, he instead turned and started walking the other way.

Unfortunately for him, Astrid was in no mood for these games. She knew what it was like to have your pride and feeling like you just couldn't swallow it even when you wanted someone to reach out and tell you everything was going to be okay. But the blond was also familiar with the sinking sensation that came when nobody stepped up to the plate. And there was no way Astrid felt she could just leave him there on a good conscious. She was still unaccustomed to him and generally everything he stood for repulsed her somehow, but if she was going to have to be the bigger person, then so be it.

And so it was with this renewed determination that she turned the truck back on.

Astrid pulled up next to him as he stubbornly tried to ignore her as he walked down the sidewalk. The reason for him being out in the snow in the first place hadn't yet been considered as Astrid slammed on the horn once more. It had the opposite effect that she wanted as he nearly doubled his pace in some vain attempt to get away. His head remained bowed forward against the cold. Either that, or he just didn't want to look at her to meet the blond's gaze.

Becoming impatient and already quick to anger, Astrid accelerated the truck to barrel past him before veering the steering wheel hard to one side. She nearly lost control when the front tires jumped the curb and hit the frozen soil and icy sidewalk, but she somehow maintained a stable grip long enough to slam on the breaks and force the vehicle to stop halfway over the concrete pathway. Not even bothering to make sure the dweeb had stopped running, Astrid yanked her seat belt off, placed the baby Nadder on the dash, slid across the truck's cabin, yanked on the passenger side's door handle, and kicked it open.

Distantly, Astrid realized it was a miracle the swinging metal door didn't hit the kid. Not even bothering to give him the option to object, the blond moved back to the driver's seat to buckle herself back in. The Nadder chirped in protest and was about to attempt to jump back to the seat when a cold wind blew inside and caused the young reptile to huddle up amongst the blankets around it. Again, Astrid chose to ignore the dragon's antics in favor of shooting Hiccup a harsh glare.

She didn't know all the details and, to be relatively honest, Astrid wasn't so sure she wanted to know. There were a lot of questions that weren't important right now. However what was vital at the moment was hitting the road as soon as humanly possible. They had a long drive ahead of them and Astrid wasn't exactly eager to be stuck in a old, freezing truck with a immature dragon and a moody, teenage boy. But, seeing as how none of them could afford plane tickets and there was no way they'd survive a hike given the distance and predicted snowfall coming their way, they weren't exactly left with many

options.

Astrid hushed the baby dragon with a light glare before turning to look out of the passenger side door. He was just standing there, looking somewhere between sincerely dumbstruck and possibly annoyed. Choosing against making a comment about it, Astrid instead turned the truck back on for the umpteenth time. The Nadder clumsily jumped down from the dash to wedge itself against the blond's side before peering over at the boy the baby dragon vaguely remembered seeing last night.

"The longer you keep this up, the longer it's gonna take us to get Toothless back."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Foot Notes<strong>:

â€¢ Random drabble idea. No idea where it came from or why I even chose to write it.

â€¢ Left it vague on purpose.

â€¢ For those who haven't read anything of mine before this, I do not write Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III. A good friend of mine role-plays with me on another site as him. As such, it feels weird to me when I use him for anything. But she has read this drabble before and she really liked it. Taking that into consideration however, I will likely not be posting the continuations I have written for this one here on fanfiction. Mostly because she wanted me to write the sequels and because I just don't want to post all of my drabbles here on this site.

End  
file.